

Mayfield (Willaim Ebbs House)
600 North New Street
West Chester Borough
Chester County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1104

HABS,
PA,
15-WCHES,
19-

PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20243

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. PA-1104

MAYFIELD (WILLIAM EBBS HOUSE)

Location: 600 North New Street, West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner and Occupant: John Chatley, Jr., 600 North New Street, West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania.

Present Use: Residence.

Statement of Significance: A handsome Classic Revival mansion, built by a Pittsburgh industrialist and lived in by his descendants for many years.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: Building was started in 1848 and finished in 1851.
2. Architect: The building is locally attributed to Thomas U. Walter.
3. Original and subsequent owners: William Ebbs, who built the house, died in 1861. His widow continued to live there until her death in 1878. Her daughter, Elizabeth Ebbs, was married in 1879 to Henry Pepper Norris, who died in 1892, leaving a son, Henry Pepper Norris. The present owner, John Chatley, Jr., bought the house from Mrs. Henry Neel, a relative of Henry Pepper Norris, in 1970.
4. Original plan and construction: Except for the addition of a kitchen wing circa 1915, the house remains unchanged. The original kitchen was in the basement.
5. Alterations and additions: A kitchen wing was added to the north of the house in about 1915. Also at that date the original conservatory, located on the west wall of the house, was rebuilt. In 1972, the glass sides and roof of the conservatory were removed, leaving only the brick walls. The porch to the east was enclosed in the 1950's.

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

None known.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: A drawing of the house appears on the Map of the Borough of West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania, surveyed and drawn by Martin and Kennedy in 1856. The original map is in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania. A photocopy of the drawing is included in this report.
2. Bibliography:

Clipping and manuscript files in the Chester County Historical Society, West Chester, Pennsylvania under the heading: "West Chester Streets: New."

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This mansion, built by a wealthy industrialist in the Classic Revival style, retains much of its original design.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: The two-and-a-half story, main block is 48' (five-bay south front) x 45', not including the porches and wing.
2. Foundations: Stone.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Whitewashed brick.
4. Porches: On the south (front) elevation is a full-height portico, with a denticulated pediment, supported by four wooden Ionic columns. The portico, which has three steps leading to it, does not extend the full length of the facade. Photocopy of an 1856 drawing of the house (included in HABS report) shows an open porch to the east; it was enclosed in the early 1950's. Porch on the north facade has simple supporting members and a flat wooden roof.
5. Chimneys: Two original pairs of brick chimneys are located on either side of the ridge at the gable ends of the roof. There is a small chimney on the flat roof of the northwest addition, over the south facade.

6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The door on the south elevation is a four-panel, double door with a three-light transom and four-light side lights. The architrave has an ornamental band of dentils and is supported on scrolled brackets. The door on the north elevation is similar to the door on the south elevation but is without brackets or an architrave.
- b. Windows and shutters: Windows on the first floor have the original six-over-six light, double-hung, wooden sash windows. On the second floor, south elevation, four windows were changed in the 1920's to the present French casement windows. The center second floor window on the south facade repeats the design of the doorway below it. Two heavy mullions divide the window frame into three sections; a wide center section flanked by two narrow vertical sections of four lights each. All of the windows on the south elevation have louvered shutters except the middle windows on the second floor. On the west side of the north elevation, first floor, is a large bay window.

7. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: A medium pitch gable roof with a gable over the portico and asbestos shingles.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The portico columns support a full entablature with plain frieze, and architrave and dentil course. The cornice runs completely around the structure, framing the gable ends in pediment form.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

- a. Basement: The original kitchen was in the basement.
- b. First floor: A wide center hall runs through the house. On the east side of it is a large drawing room with two original marble fireplaces. The west side of the house has rooms to the north and south with the stairway between. Behind the north room (presently a dining room, historically the library) is the kitchen.
- c. Second floor: Plan is similar to the first floor. Four bedrooms open off of a wide center hall.

- d. Third floor: The third floor has three rooms, two with fireplaces.
 2. Stairways: The staircase is located on the west side of the center hall. It is a right-handed, two run stairway.
 3. Flooring: Original wooden flooring.
 4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls are painted plaster. Ceilings in all rooms and hall on the first floor, main block of the house, have decorative plaster medallions for chandeliers. Southeast drawing room has an elaborate plaster cornice; hall way has paneled wainscot chair rail and a simple wooden ceiling cornice.
 5. Doorways and doors: There are three large doorways (10' in width) with shouldered architraves in the central hall: the entrance doors on the north and south walls and the doorway framing the stairs. The doors on the first floor are eight-paneled, those on the second floor six-paneled. The original eight-paneled door into the northwest (kitchen) wing has been altered so that the two upper panels now form the architrave of the doorway.
 6. Special decorative features, trim, cabinet work: All the first floor rooms, with the exception of the kitchen, have fireplaces. Those in the east drawing room have original marble mantles, those in northwest and southwest rooms have wooden mantles. Photograph taken circa 1880 (property of the owner) shows that the present cherub and wreath decorated mantelpiece in the northwest room was added after 1880.
 7. Hardware: There are circa 1880 French brass door knobs on the first floor, and porcelain knobs with painted flowers on some second floor rooms. All of the first floor windows have blind interior shutters. Southeast and southwest rooms on the second floor also have original interior shutters.
 8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating: Steam heating. Fireplaces in most of the rooms.
 - b. Lighting: Electric.
- D. Site:
1. General setting and orientation: The house faces south in the middle of a lot, separated by a high hedge from the housing development around it. There is a circular drive in front of the house.

2. Historic landscape design: Some lawn and gardens remain. Until the 1950's when most of the land was sold for a development, extensive well-planted lawns and gardens were maintained.
3. Outbuildings: A carriage house with connected stable is located to the rear (northwest) of the house.

Prepared by Bart Anderson
Curator
Chester County Historical
Society
August 1958
and
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PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

These records were prepared as part of a cooperative survey of 100 Chester County buildings conducted by the Historic American Buildings Survey and the Chester County Historical Society between 1958 and 1962. This was the first large-scale project undertaken after the reinstitution of HABS in 1957, and it established the pattern of cooperation with state and local preservation groups which has characterized the HABS program in recent years. Written data was prepared by Bart Anderson, Curator of the Chester County Historical Society, with the assistance of Jim Sorber and others. HABS hired local professional photographer, Ned Goode, to take the documentary photographs. The written material was edited and expanded in 1975 by Marion Morton working under contract with HABS.